

Foreign Language Enrollment Trends

Trendy Languages

Dennis Looney

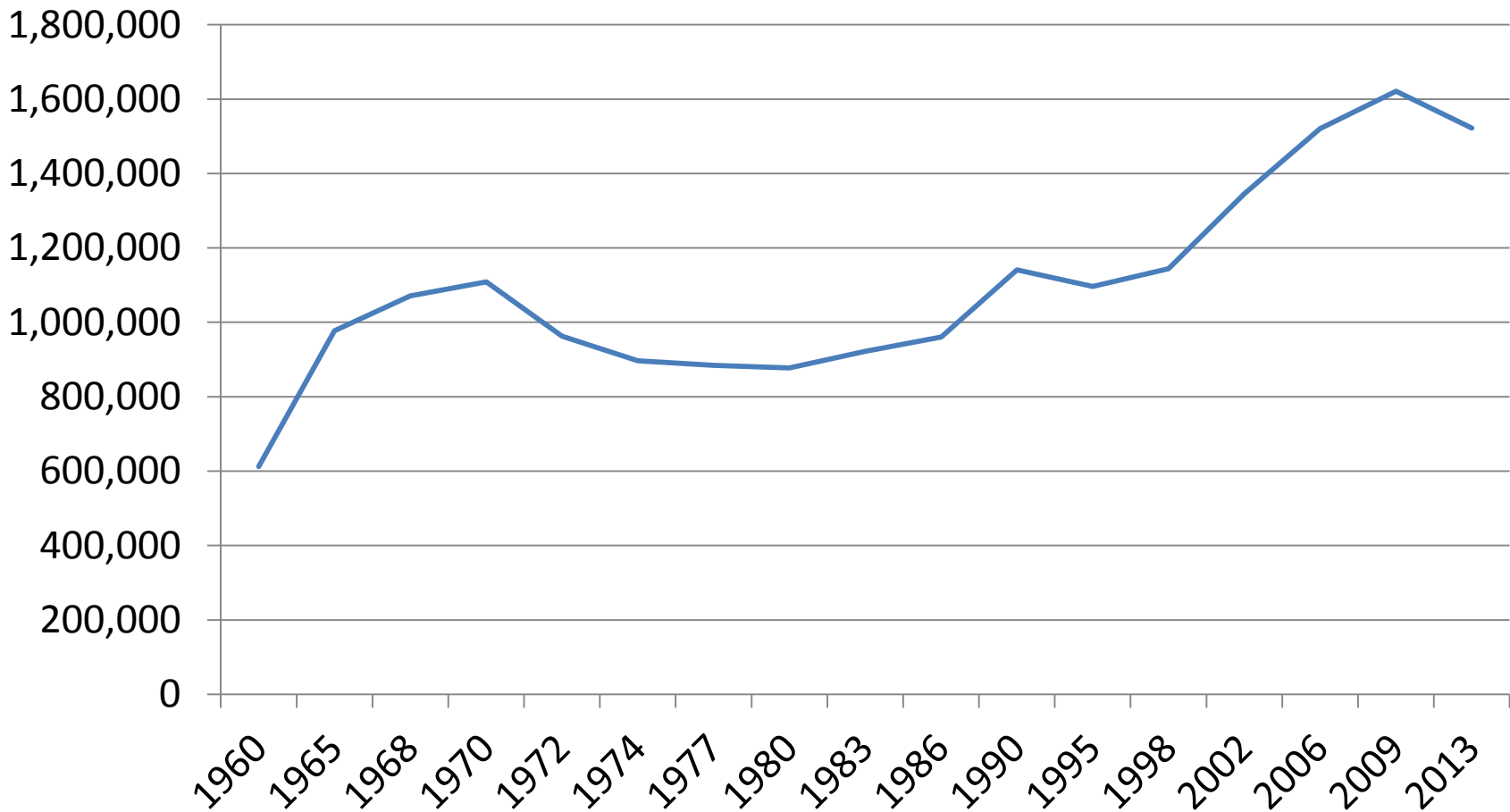
Modern Language Association

University of California, Berkeley

September 9, 2016

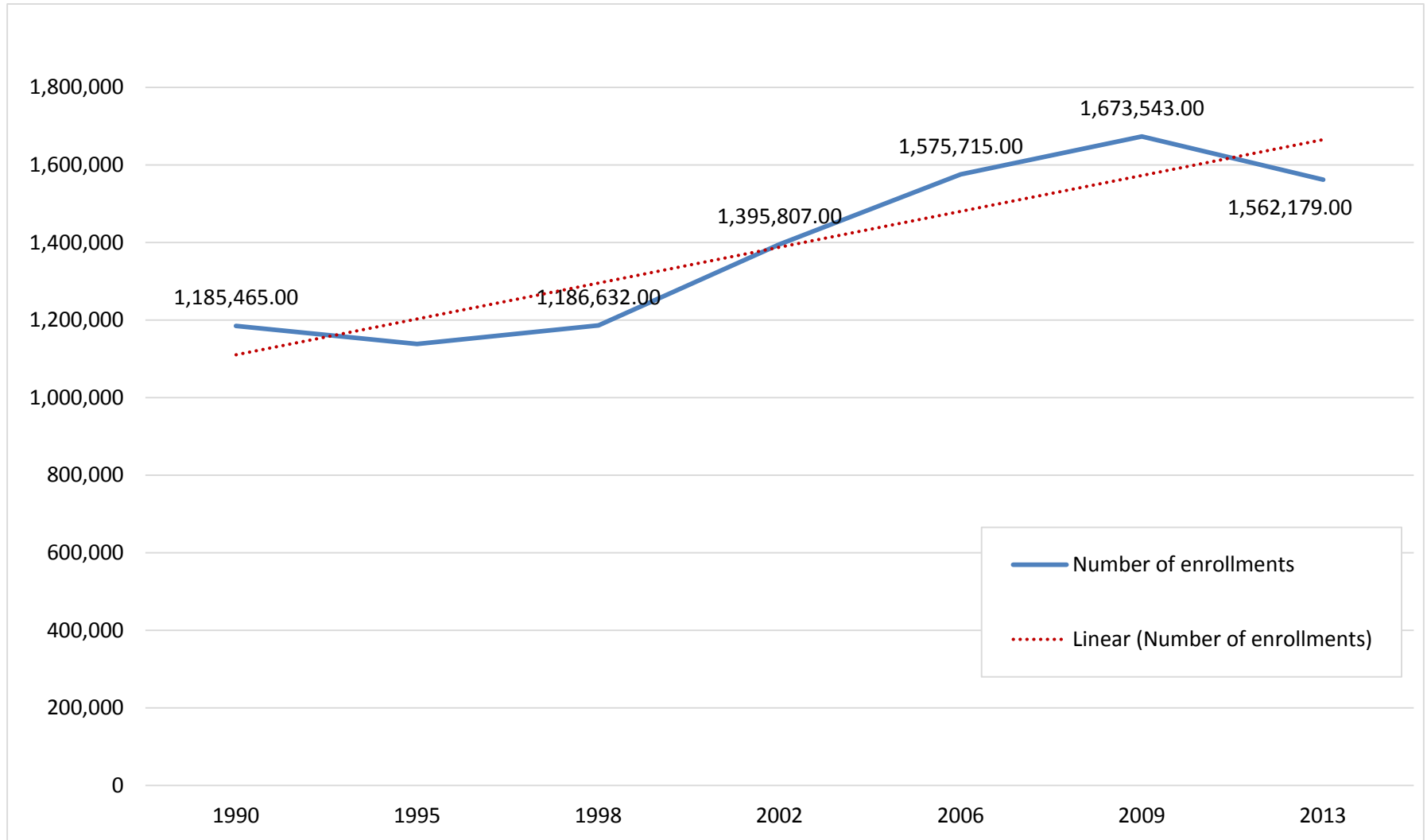


Language Enrollments by Year, Excluding Latin and Ancient Greek

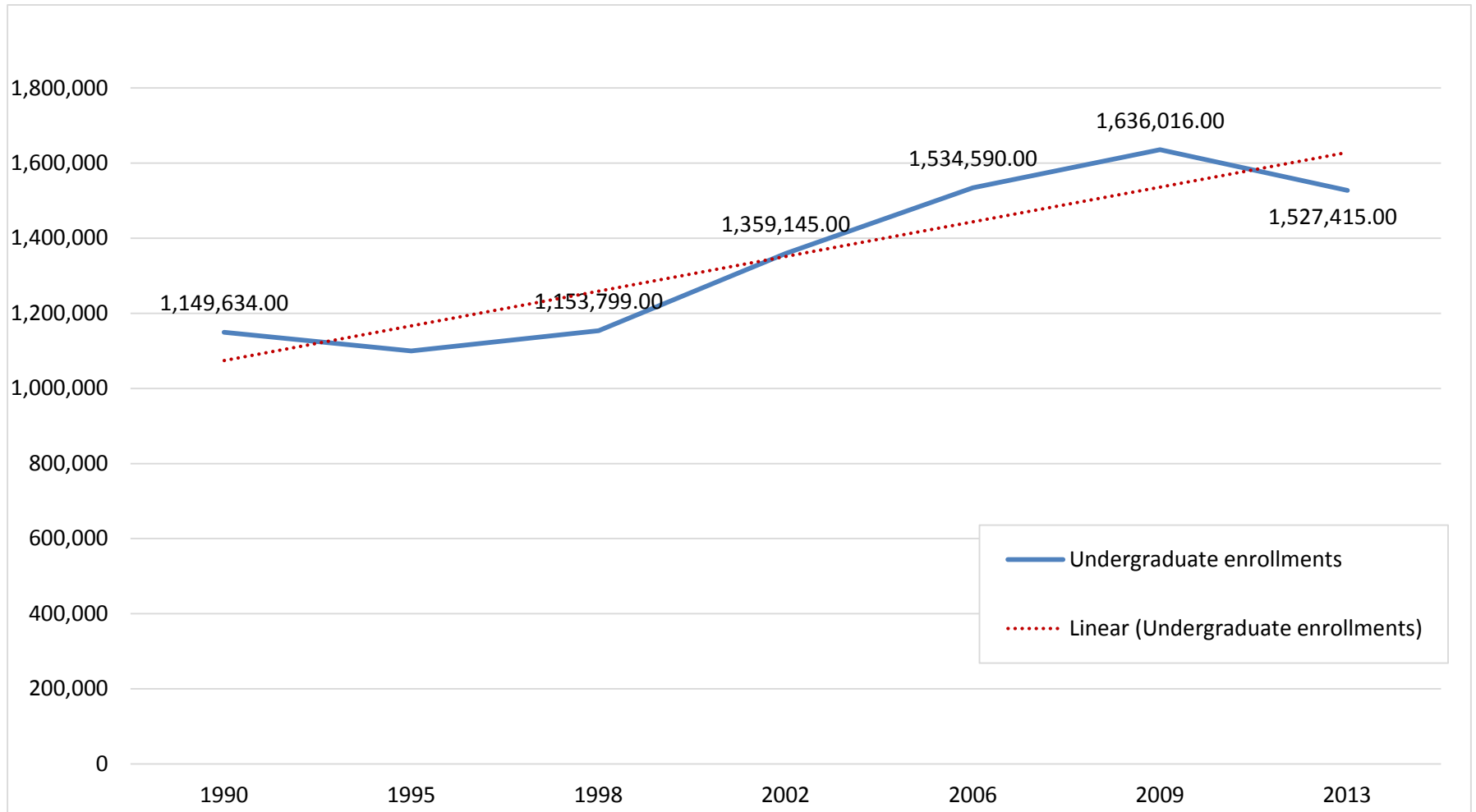


Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

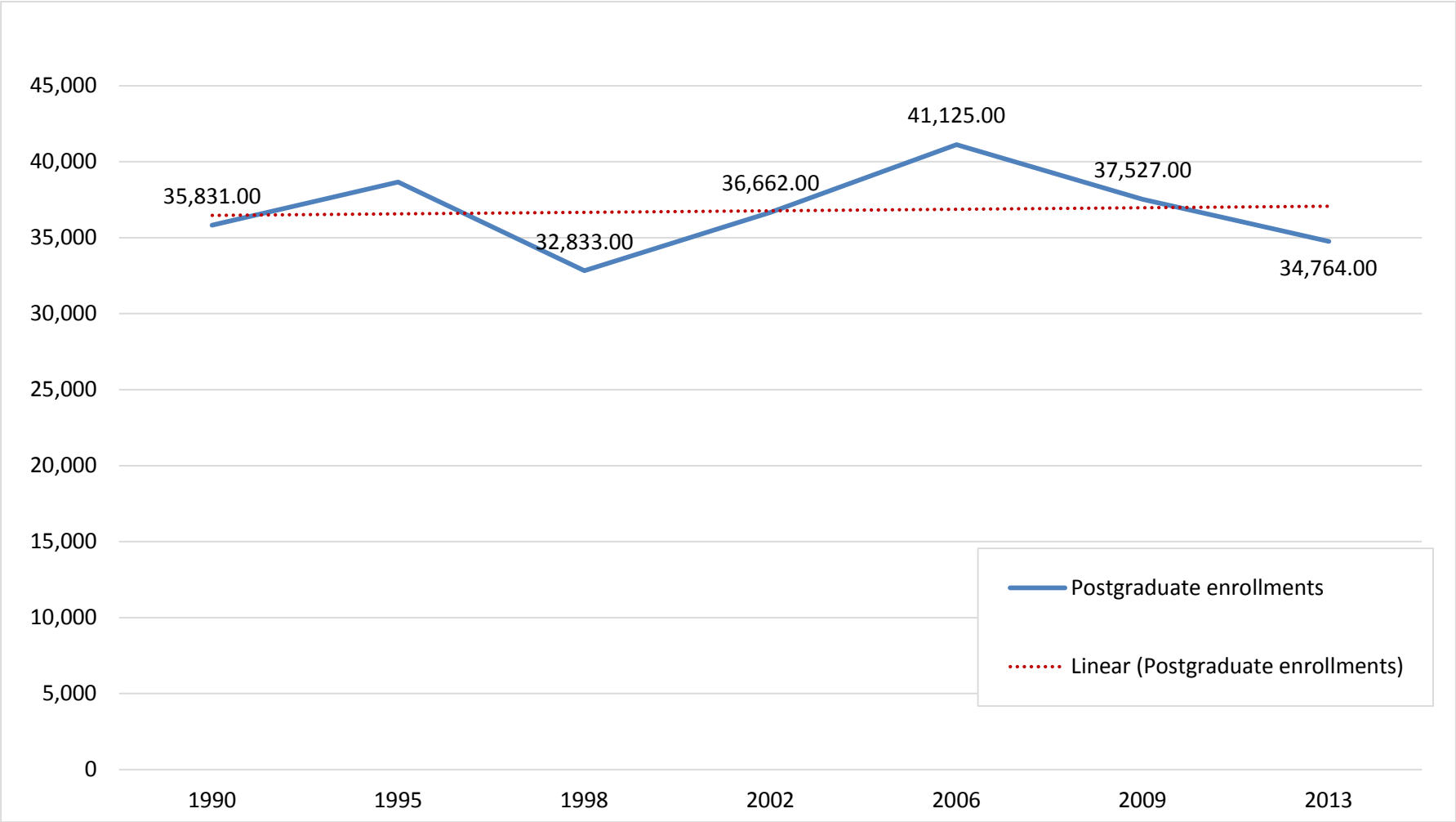
Total Enrollments , MLA Surveys of Foreign Language Enrollments, 1990–2013



Undergraduate Enrollments , MLA Surveys of Foreign Language Enrollments, 1990–2013

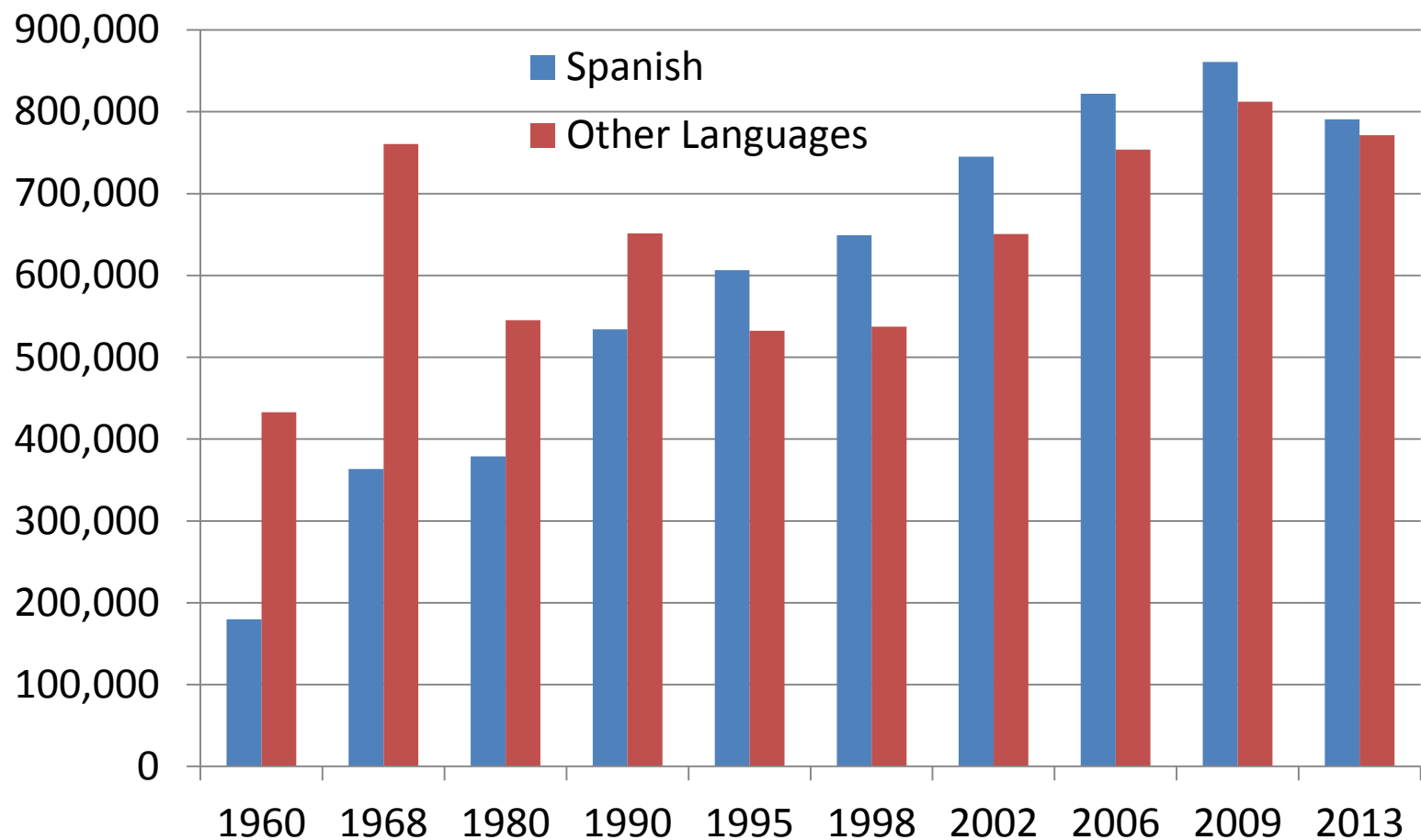


Postgraduate Enrollments , MLA Surveys of Foreign Language Enrollments, 1990–2013

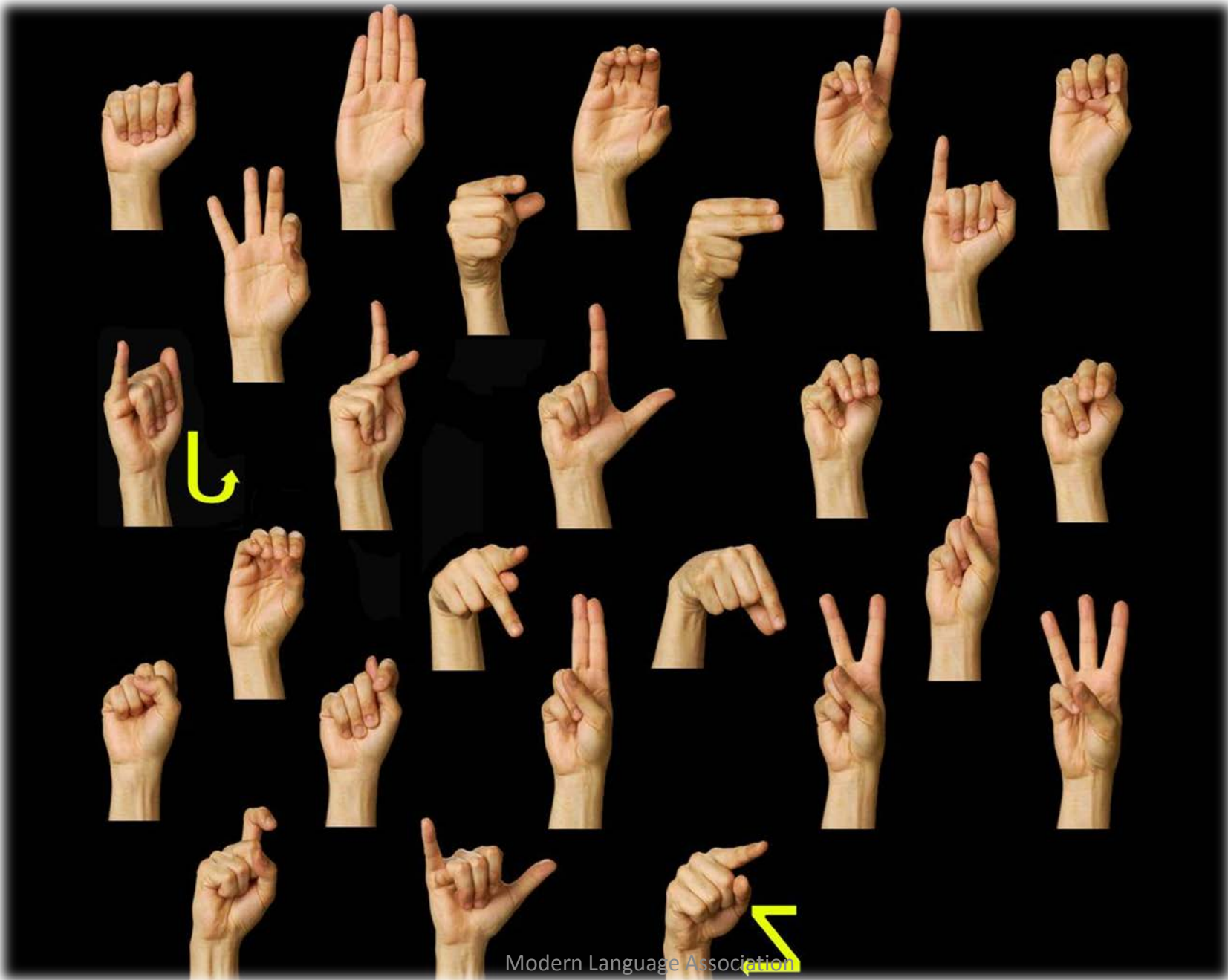




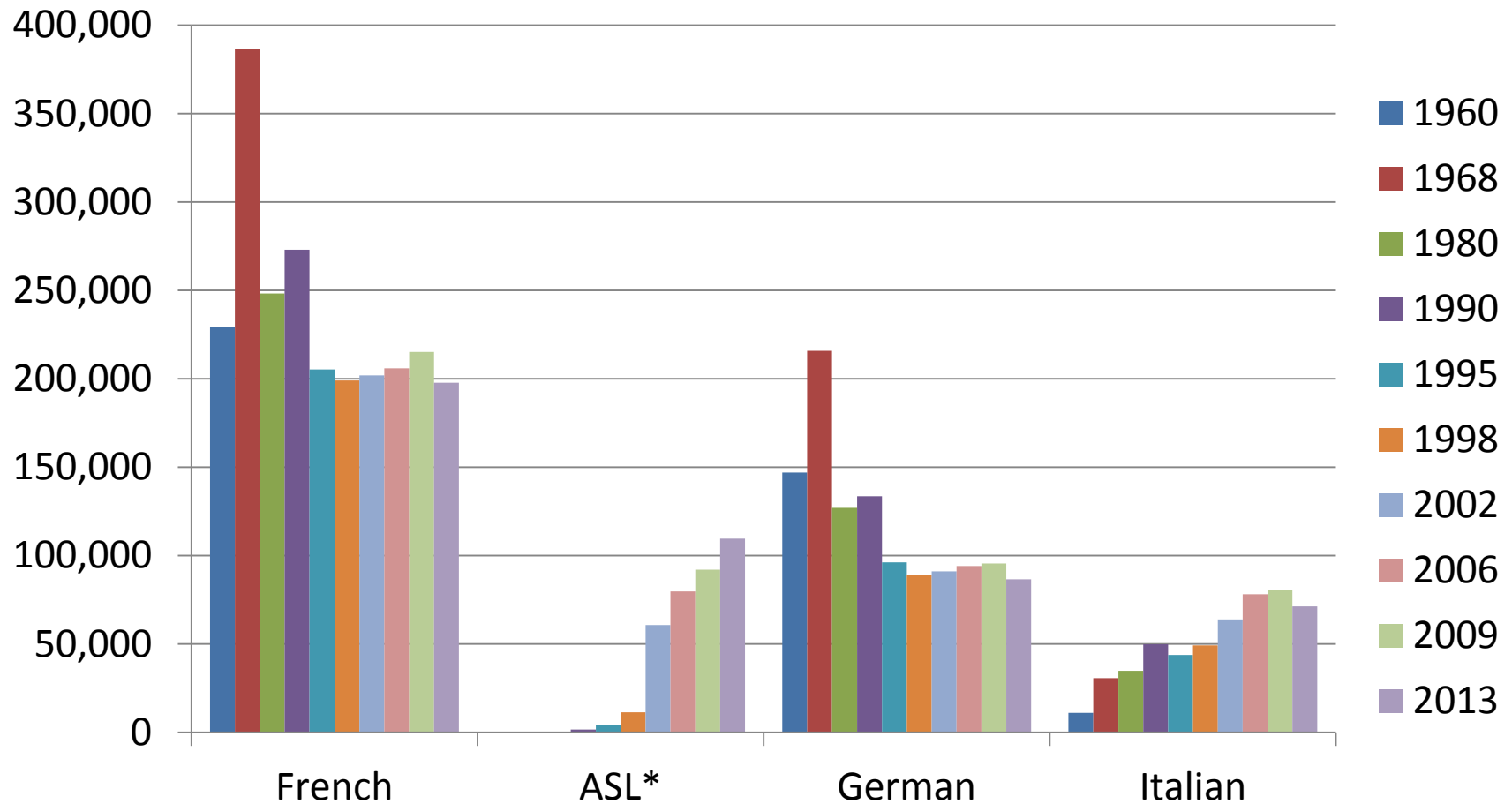
Enrollments in Spanish Compared with Those of All Other Languages



Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.



Enrollments in French, ASL, German, and Italian



Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Subjekt

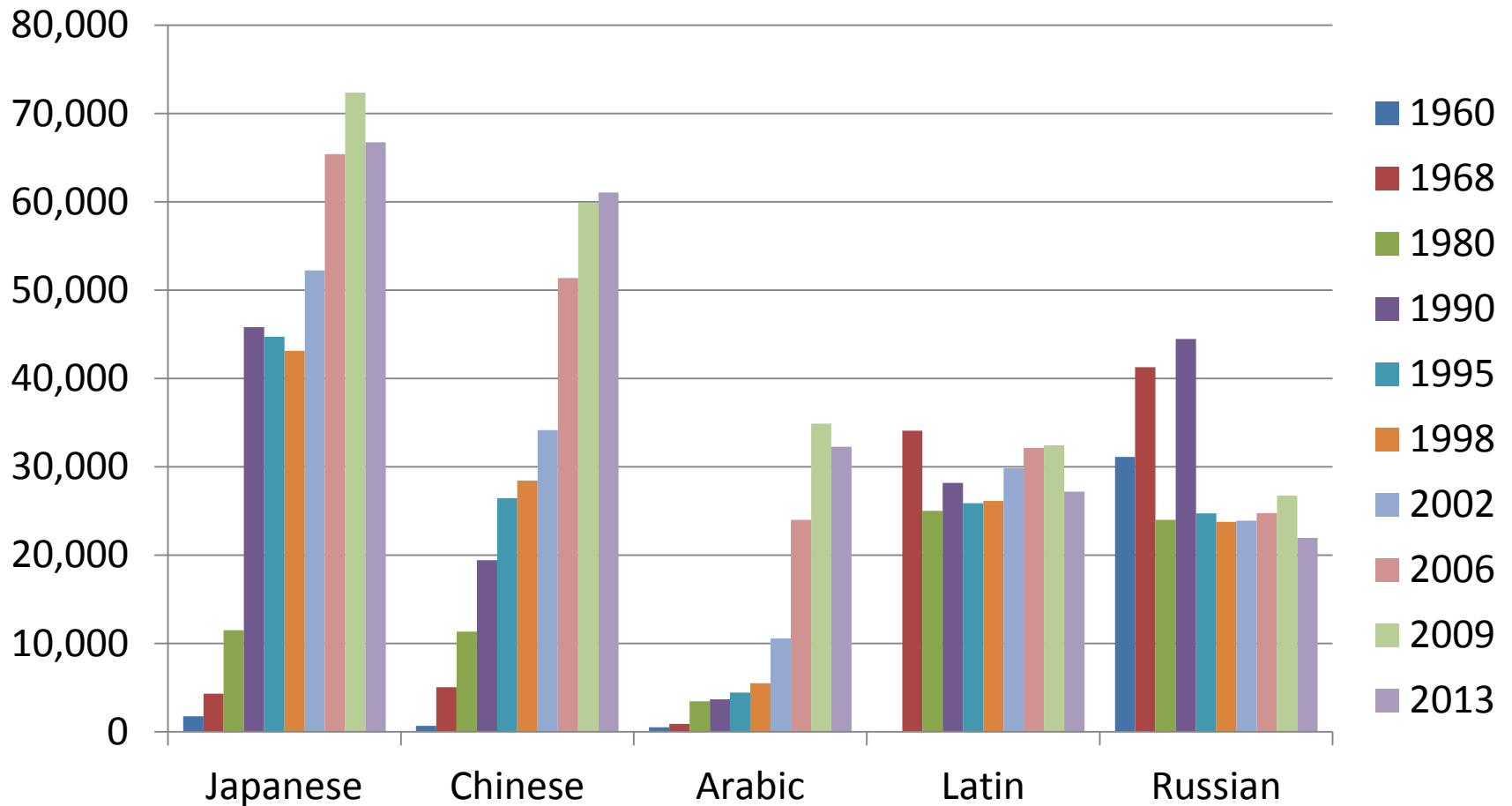
Objekt

Prädikat

Ich lese den Text.

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Enrollments in Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, Latin, and Russian

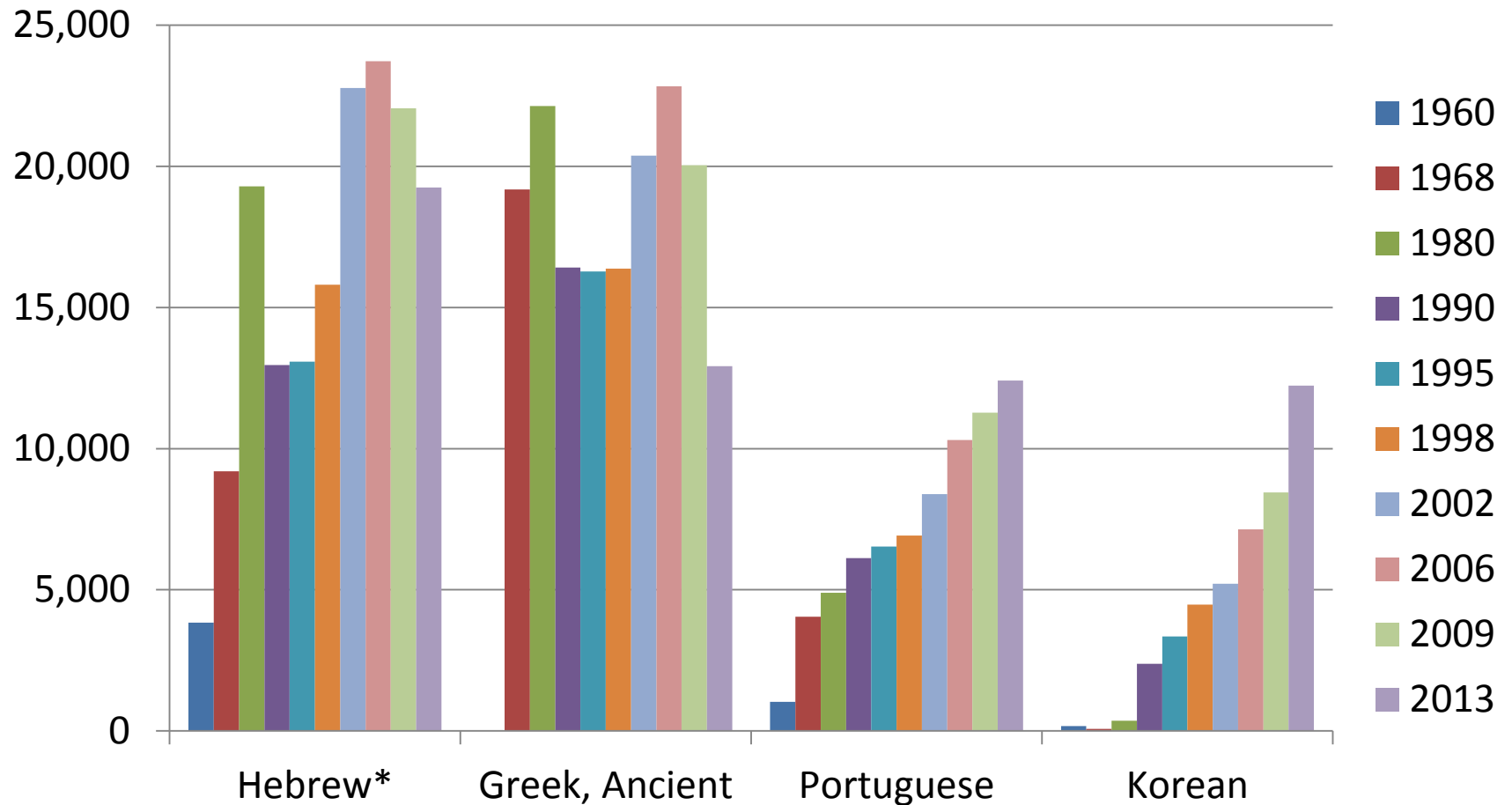


Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

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Enrollments in Hebrew, Ancient Greek, Portuguese, and Korean



Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Undergraduate Language Course Enrollments in Four-Year Colleges (Languages in Descending Order of 2013 Totals)

Language	1974	1977	1980	1983	1986	1990	1995	1998	2002	2006	2009	2013	% Change 2009-13	% Change 1974-2013
Spanish	265,179	274,375	276,900	290,215	314,861	391,972	434,507	473,269	522,398	587,212	615,326	580,480	-5.7	118.9
French	209,632	203,745	205,477	223,411	228,803	221,862	168,642	165,384	164,425	169,940	176,146	163,257	-7.3	-22.1
German	127,639	113,301	106,578	106,812	101,314	110,198	80,638	74,819	76,690	79,011	81,198	75,218	-7.4	-41.1
Italian	26,625	26,759	28,254	31,321	33,778	40,657	36,275	41,256	51,898	64,358	66,127	59,689	-9.7	124.2
ASL*						439	852	4,297	22,772	34,348	39,407	56,065	42.3	--
Japanese	7,063	7,889	8,521	12,341	17,966	34,635	33,945	32,628	38,723	48,874	53,796	51,618	-4.0	630.8
Chinese	8,328	7,687	9,048	10,840	14,087	15,090	21,014	22,546	27,034	41,725	49,641	51,433	3.6	517.6
Arabic	1,614	2,446	2,862	2,555	2,680	2,874	3,807	3,902	8,205	18,633	27,946	26,497	-5.2	1,541.7
Latin	23,543	23,021	23,727	22,857	23,739	26,311	24,043	24,454	27,798	30,189	29,996	25,349	-15.5	7.7
Russian	29,018	25,084	21,776	27,732	30,904	39,291	21,405	20,647	20,509	21,645	23,536	19,399	-17.6	-33.1
Portuguese	4,512	4,211	4,192	3,875	4,441	5,421	5,359	5,958	7,174	9,033	9,871	11,201	13.5	148.2
Korean	67	135	322	568	845	2,188	2,943	3,546	4,045	5,665	7,018	10,195	45.3	15,116.4
Greek, Ancient	18,640	20,062	17,106	14,280	12,912	11,416	11,809	11,824	14,252	16,347	15,339	9,940	-35.2	-46.7
Hebrew, Biblical**						2,425	2,421	5,648	9,008	8,501	8,533	7,902	-7.4	--
Hebrew, Modern**						6,128	6,401	6,120	7,683	8,442	7,498	6,121	-18.4	--

Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Enrollments in the Fourteen Leading Languages

Language	1960	1968	1980	1990	1995	1998	2002	2006	2009	2013	% Change 1960 - 2013
Spanish	179,892	363,389	378,952	534,143	606,286	649,245	745,215	822,094	861,008	790,756	339.6
French	229,640	386,694	248,303	273,116	205,351	199,064	201,985	206,014	215,244	197,757	-13.9
ASL*	--	--	--	1,602	4,304	11,420	60,781	79,708	92,072	109,577	--
German	146,950	215,883	127,015	133,594	96,263	89,013	91,100	94,147	95,628	86,700	-41.0
Italian	11,084	30,732	34,793	49,824	43,760	49,287	63,899	78,176	80,322	71,285	543.1
Japanese	1,754	4,322	11,516	45,830	44,723	43,141	52,238	65,403	72,359	66,740	3,705.0
Chinese	679	5,061	11,366	19,427	26,471	28,456	34,153	51,381	59,876	61,055	8,891.9
Arabic	515	918	3,471	3,683	4,444	5,505	10,584	23,987	34,908	32,286	6,169.1
Latin**	--	34,084	25,019	28,178	25,897	26,145	29,841	32,164	32,444	27,192	--
Russian	31,122	41,280	23,987	44,476	24,729	23,791	23,921	24,770	26,753	21,962	-29.4
Hebrew***	3,839	9,201	19,290	12,966	13,083	15,807	22,774	23,729	22,056	19,249	401.4
Greek, Ancient**	--	19,178	22,132	16,414	16,272	16,381	20,376	22,831	20,040	12,917	--
Portuguese	1,034	4,048	4,894	6,118	6,531	6,926	8,385	10,310	11,273	12,415	1,100.7
Korean	168	70	365	2,375	3,343	4,479	5,211	7,146	8,449	12,229	7,179.2
Total	606,677	1,114,860	911,103	1,171,746	1,121,457	1,168,660	1,370,463	1,541,860	1,632,432	1,522,120	150.9

Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

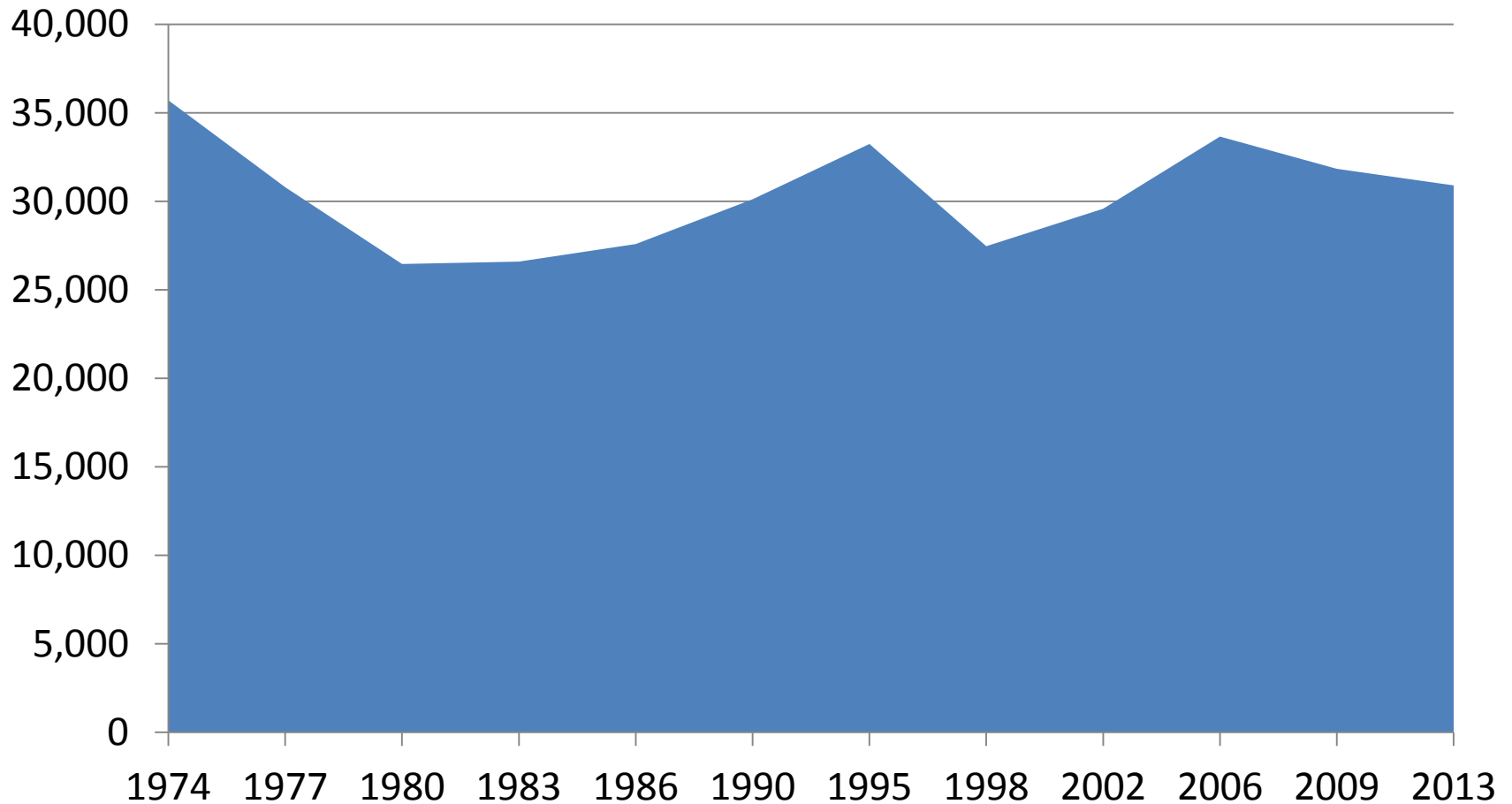
Percentage of Total Language Course Enrollments for the Fourteen Most Commonly Taught Languages in 2013

Language	1968	1980	1990	1995	2002	2006	2009	2013
Spanish	32.3	41.0	45.1	53.2	53.4	52.2	51.4	50.6
French	34.4	26.9	23.0	18.0	14.5	13.1	12.9	12.7
ASL	-	-	0.1	0.4	4.4	5.1	5.5	7.0
German	19.2	13.7	11.3	8.5	6.5	6.0	5.7	5.5
Italian	2.7	3.8	4.2	3.8	4.6	5.0	4.8	4.6
Japanese	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.9	3.7	4.2	4.3	4.3
Chinese	0.5	1.2	1.6	2.3	2.4	3.3	3.6	3.9
Arabic	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.8	1.5	2.1	2.1
Latin	3.0	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.7
Russian	3.7	2.6	3.8	2.2	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.4
Hebrew*	0.8	2.1	1.1	1.1	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.2
Greek, Ancient	1.7	2.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.8
Portuguese	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8
Korean	0.01	0.04	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.8
Other languages	0.8	1.4	1.2	1.5	1.8	2.1	2.5	2.6
Total percentage	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total enrollments	1,124,021	924,337	1,185,465	1,138,772	1,395,807	1,575,715	1,673,543	1,562,179



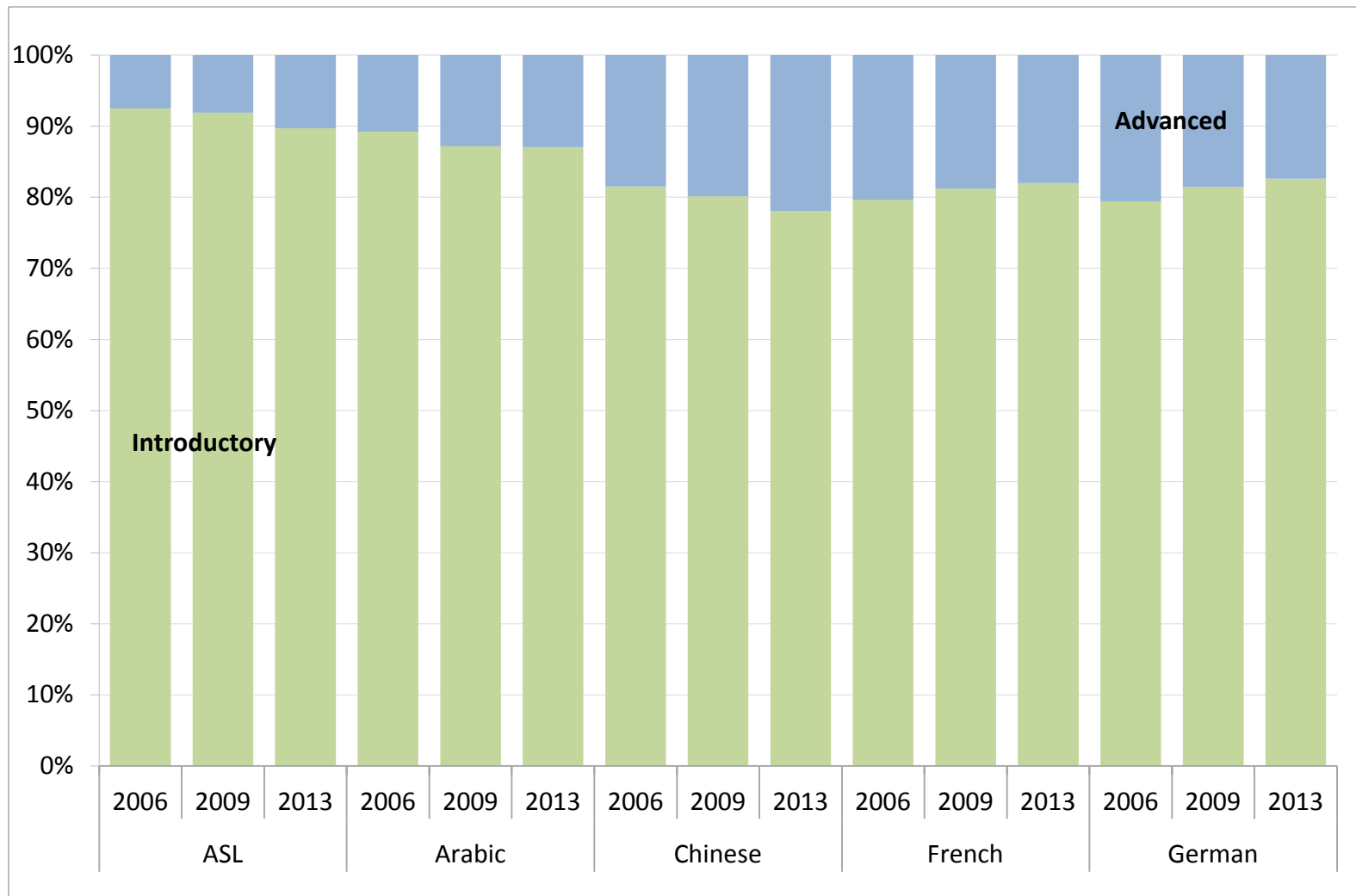
Graduate Language Enrollments

Excluding Latin and Ancient Greek

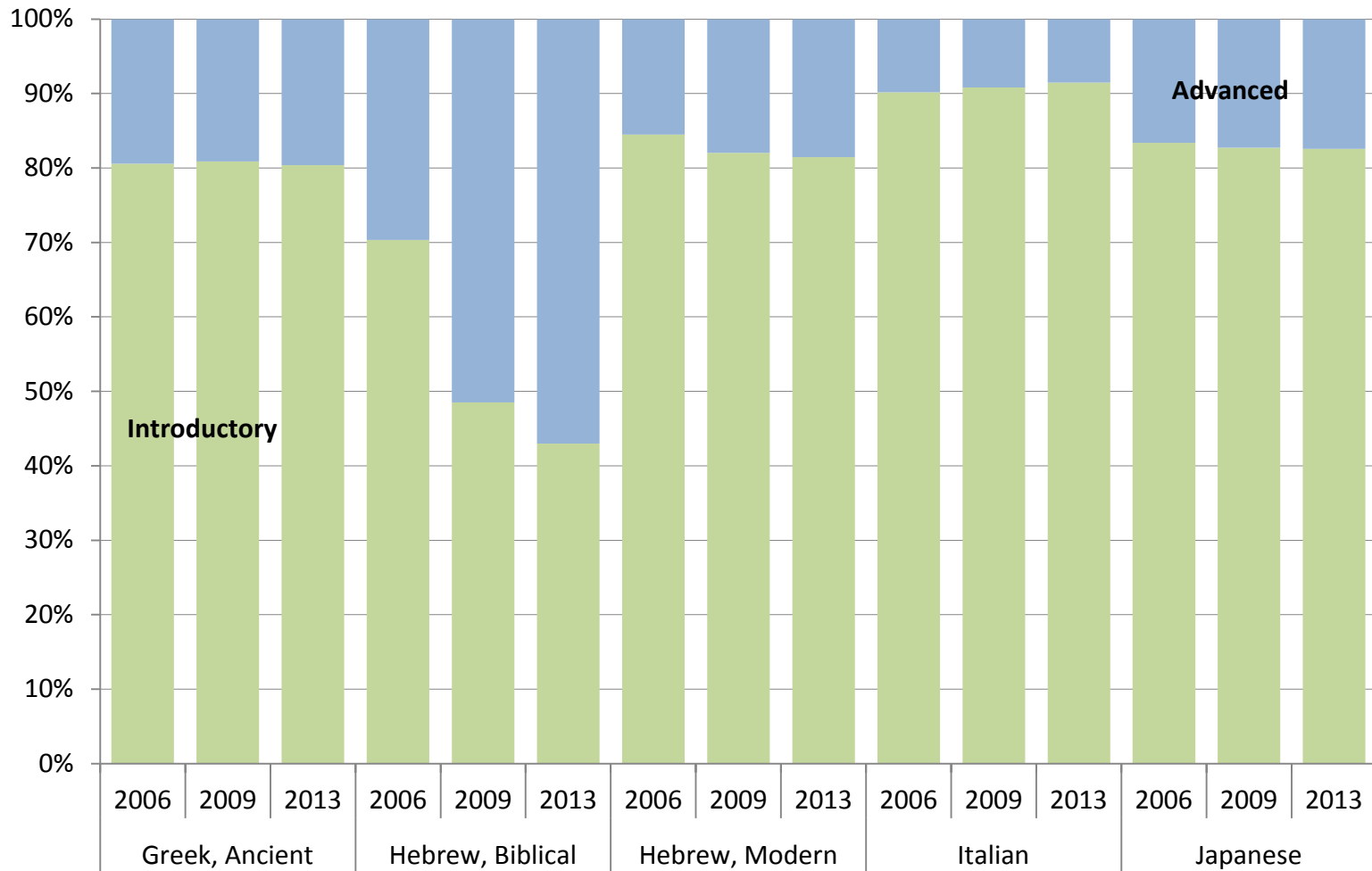


Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Percentages of Introductory and Advanced Undergraduate Enrollments in the Top Fifteen Languages, 2006, 2009, and 2013

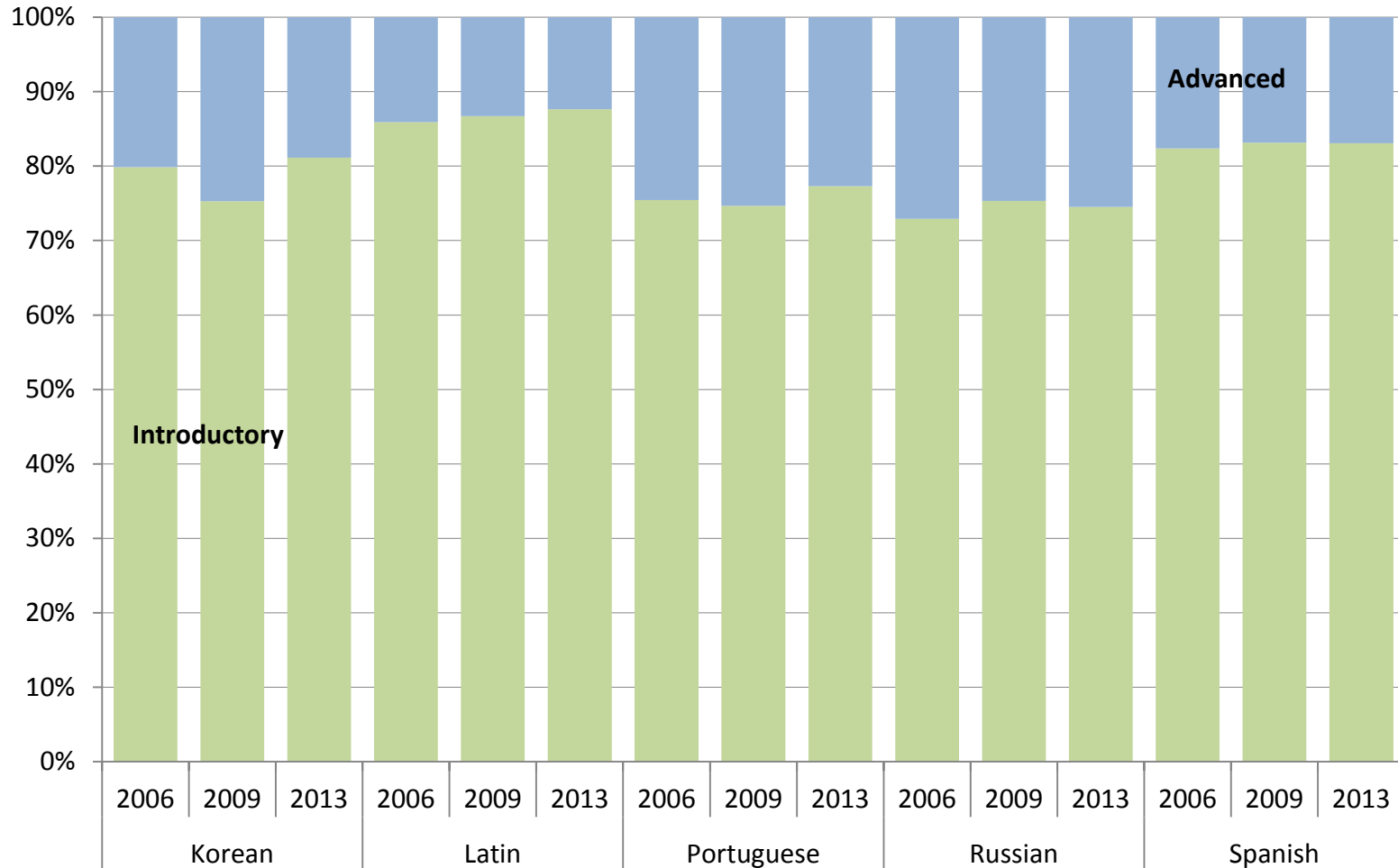


Percentages of Introductory and Advanced Undergraduate Enrollments in the Top Fifteen Languages, 2006, 2009, and 2013



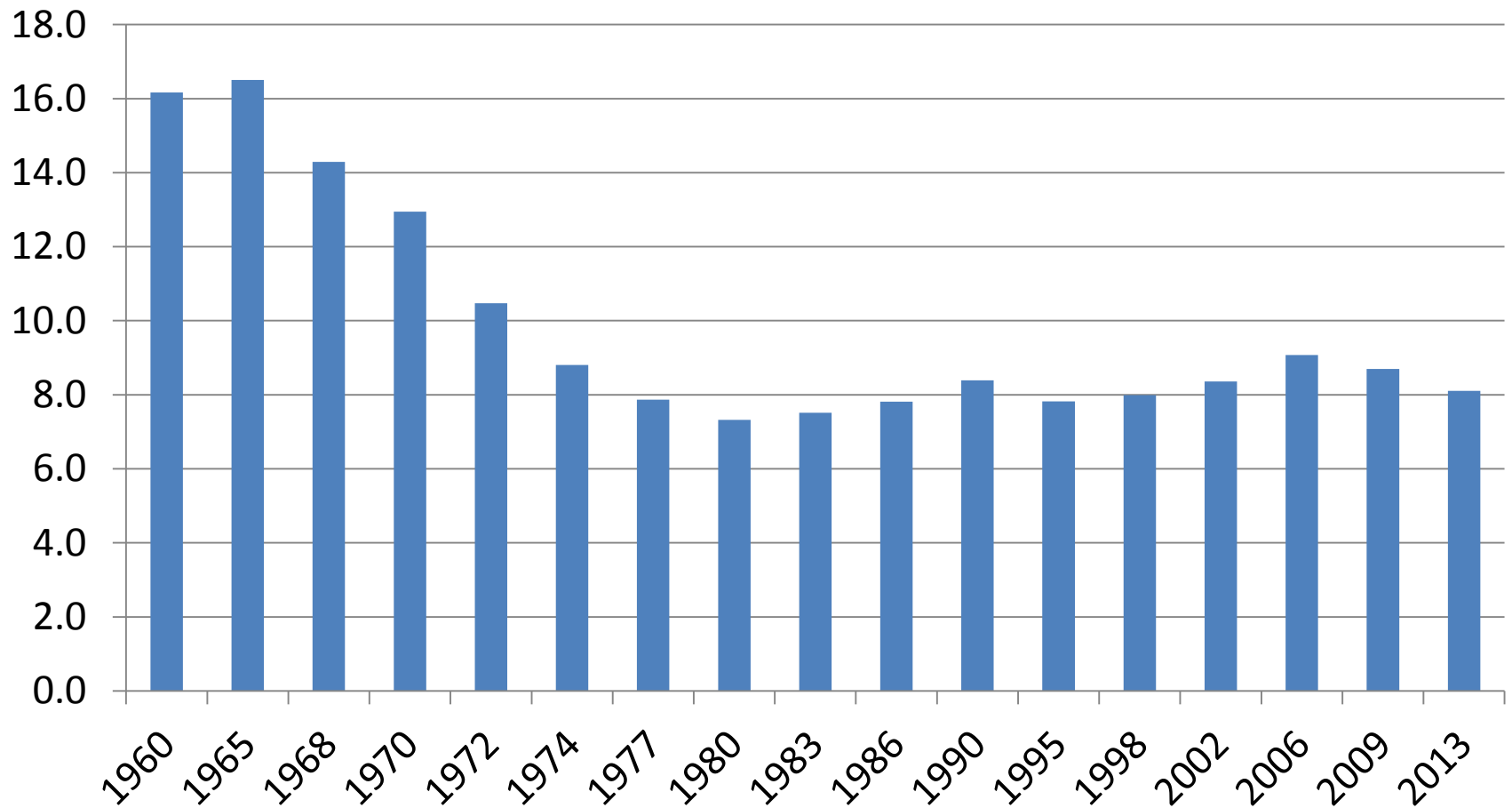
Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Percentages of Introductory and Advanced Undergraduate Enrollments in the Top Fifteen Languages, 2006, 2009, and 2013





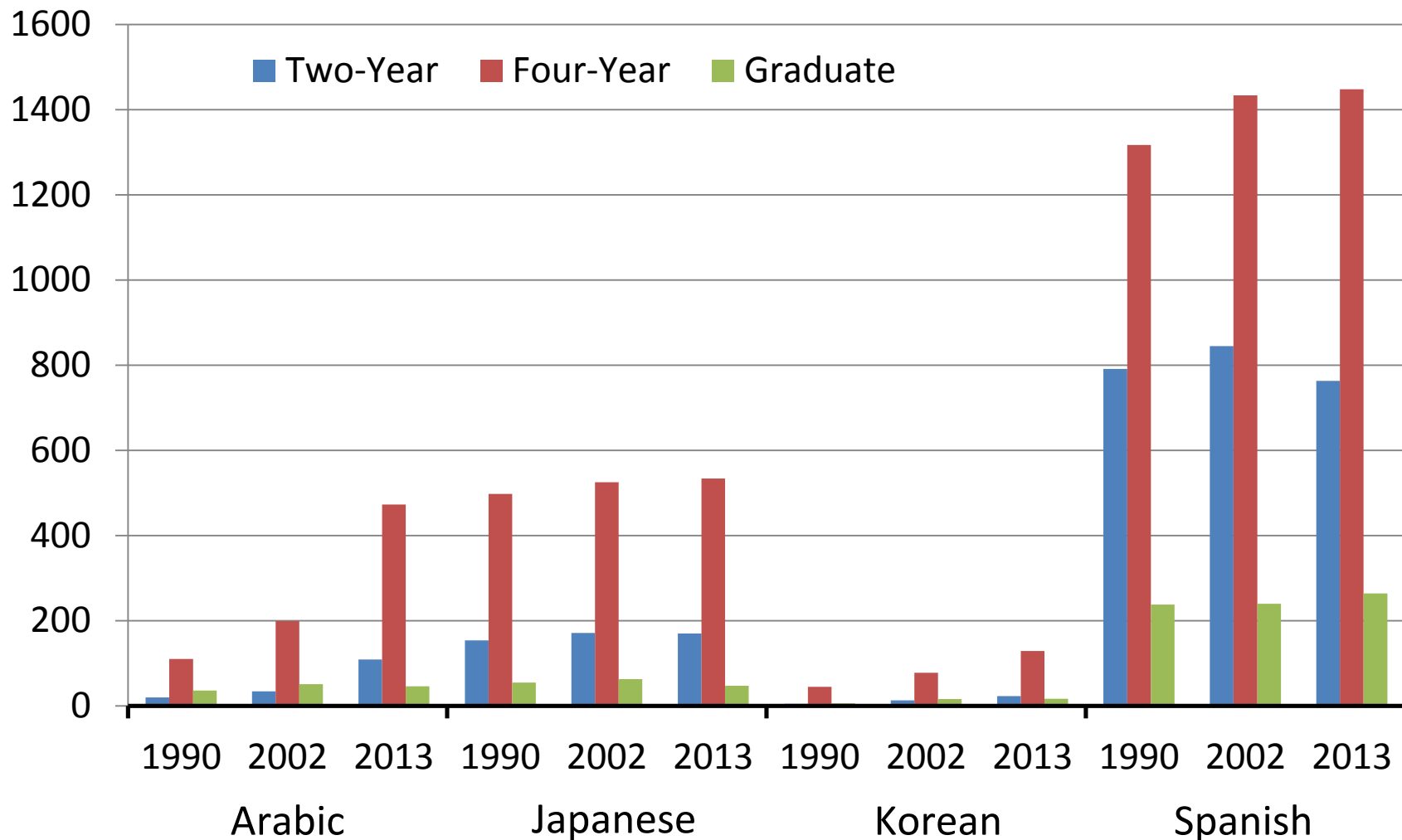
Modern Language Enrollments per 100 US College Students



Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

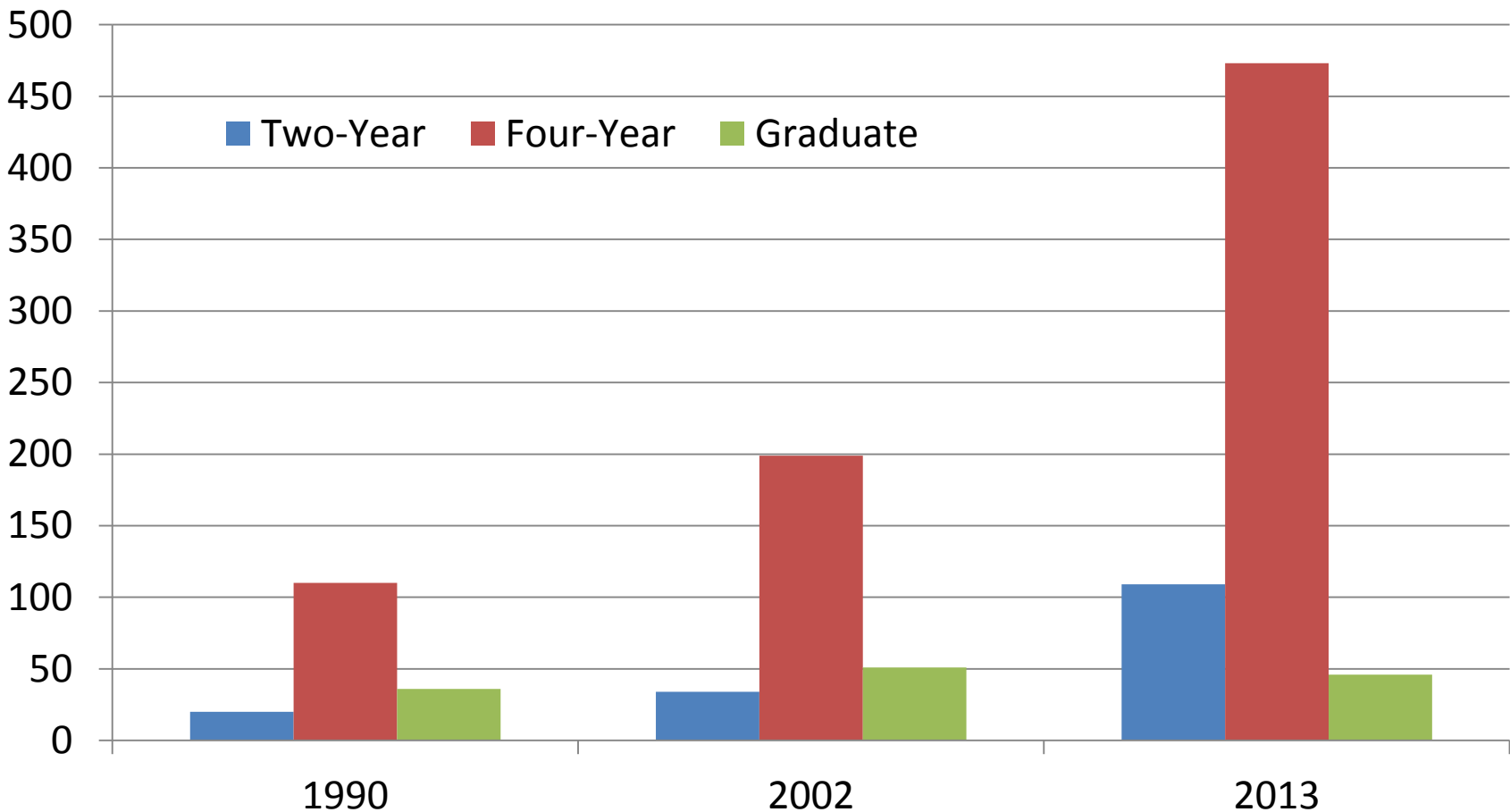


Number of Institutions Reporting Enrollments in Arabic, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish, by Level



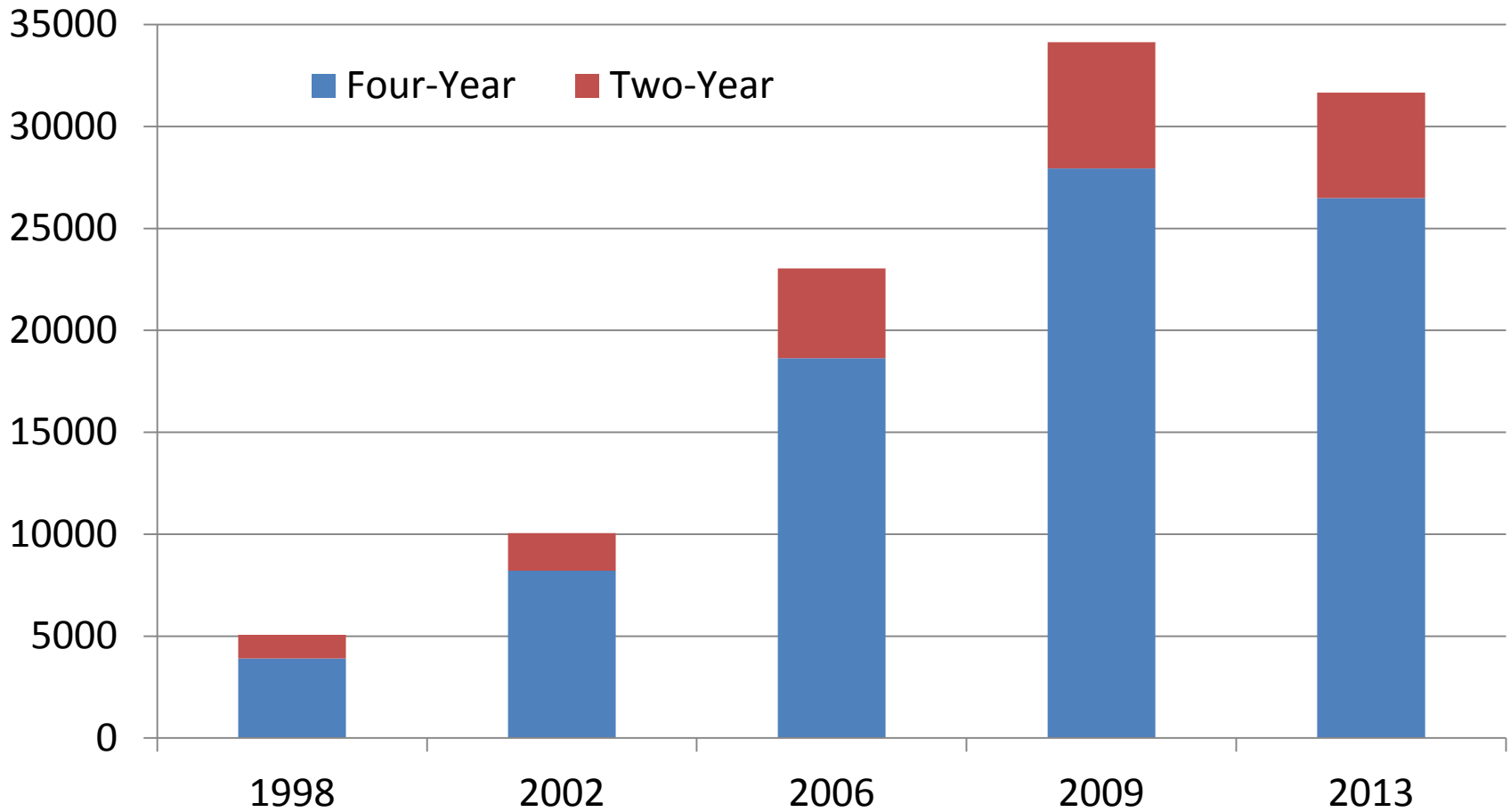
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Number of Institutions Reporting Enrollments in Arabic, by Level



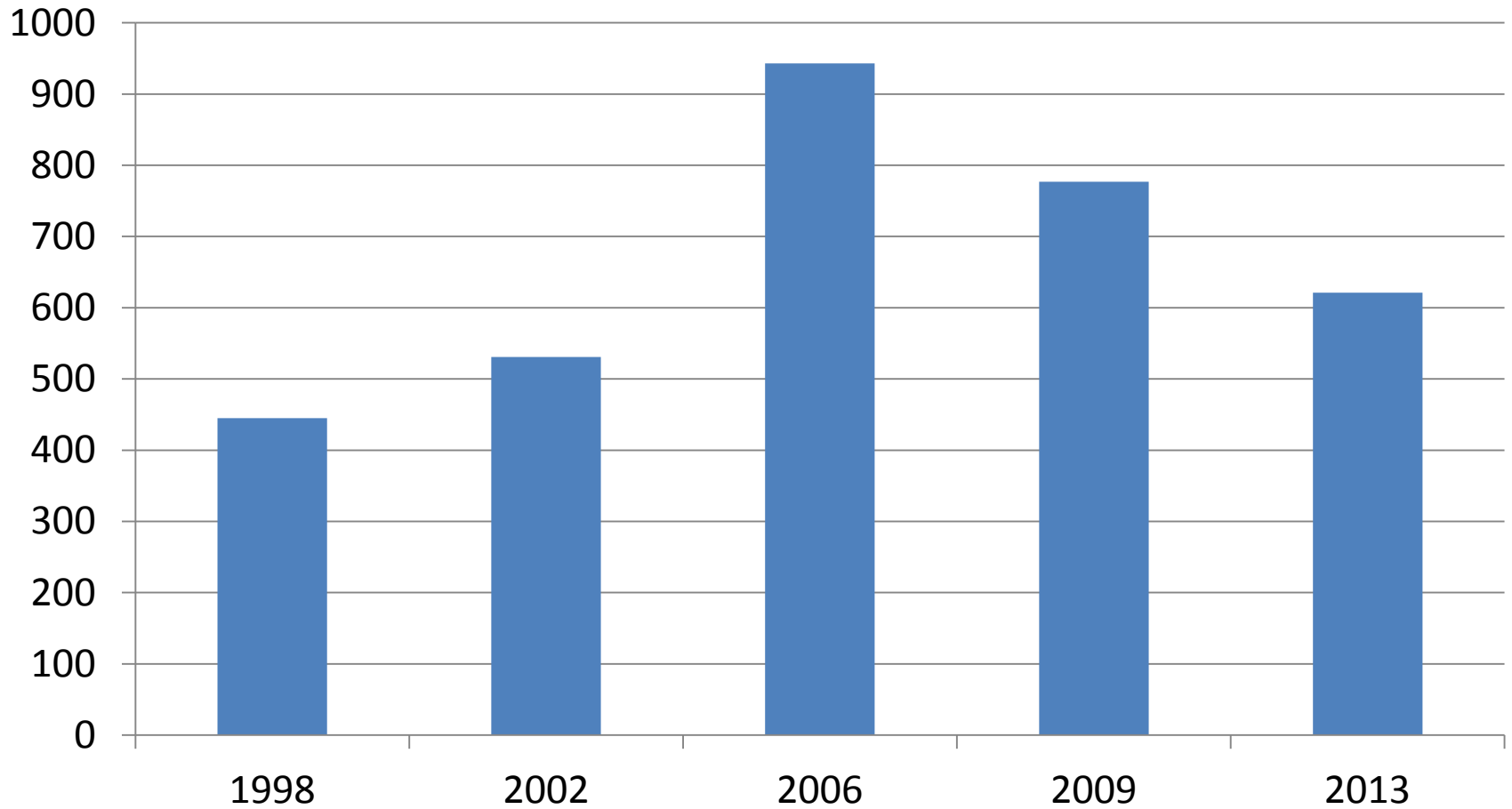
Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Undergraduate Enrollments in Arabic



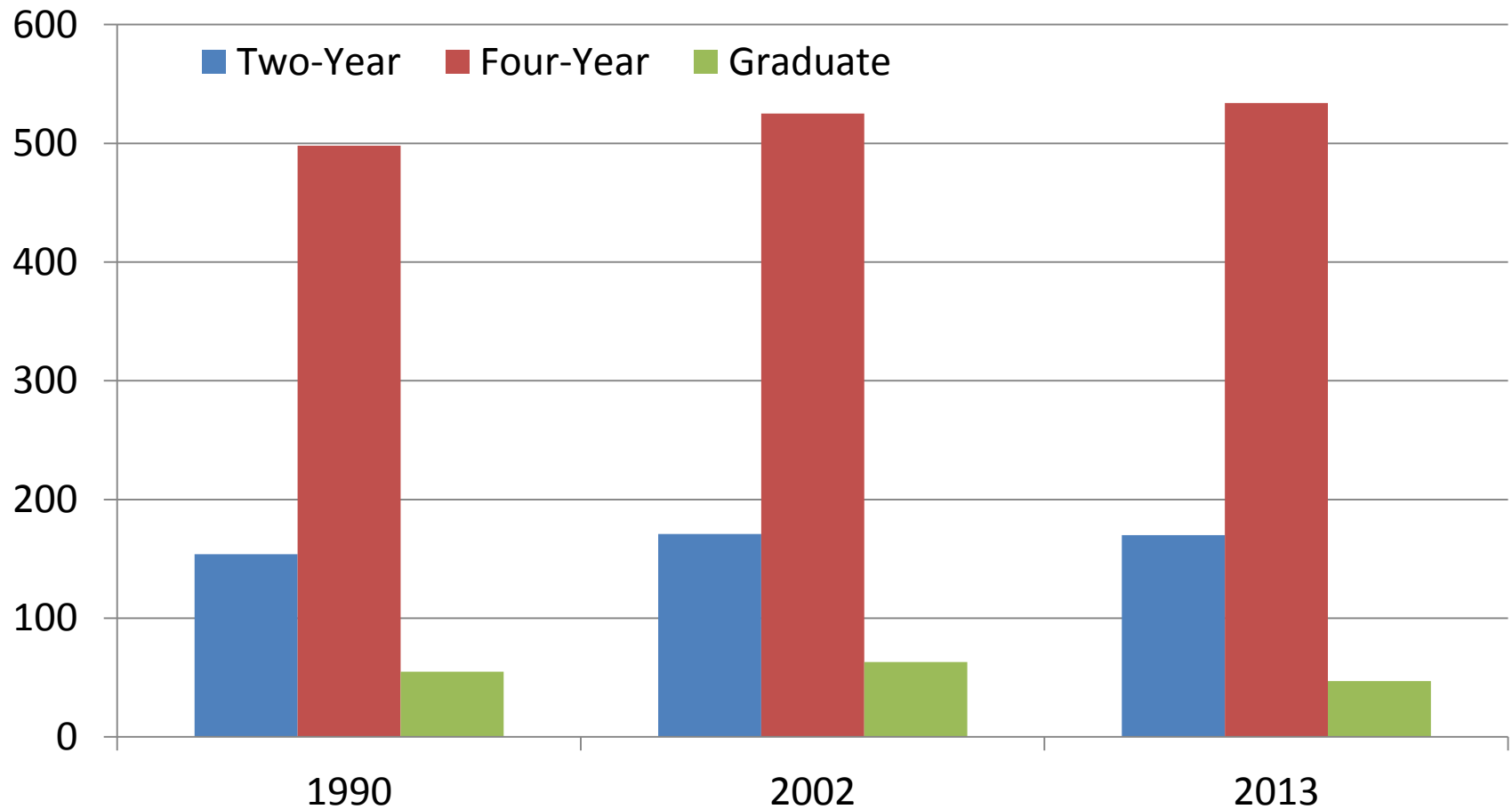
Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Graduate Enrollments in Arabic



Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Number of Institutions Reporting Enrollments in Japanese, by Level

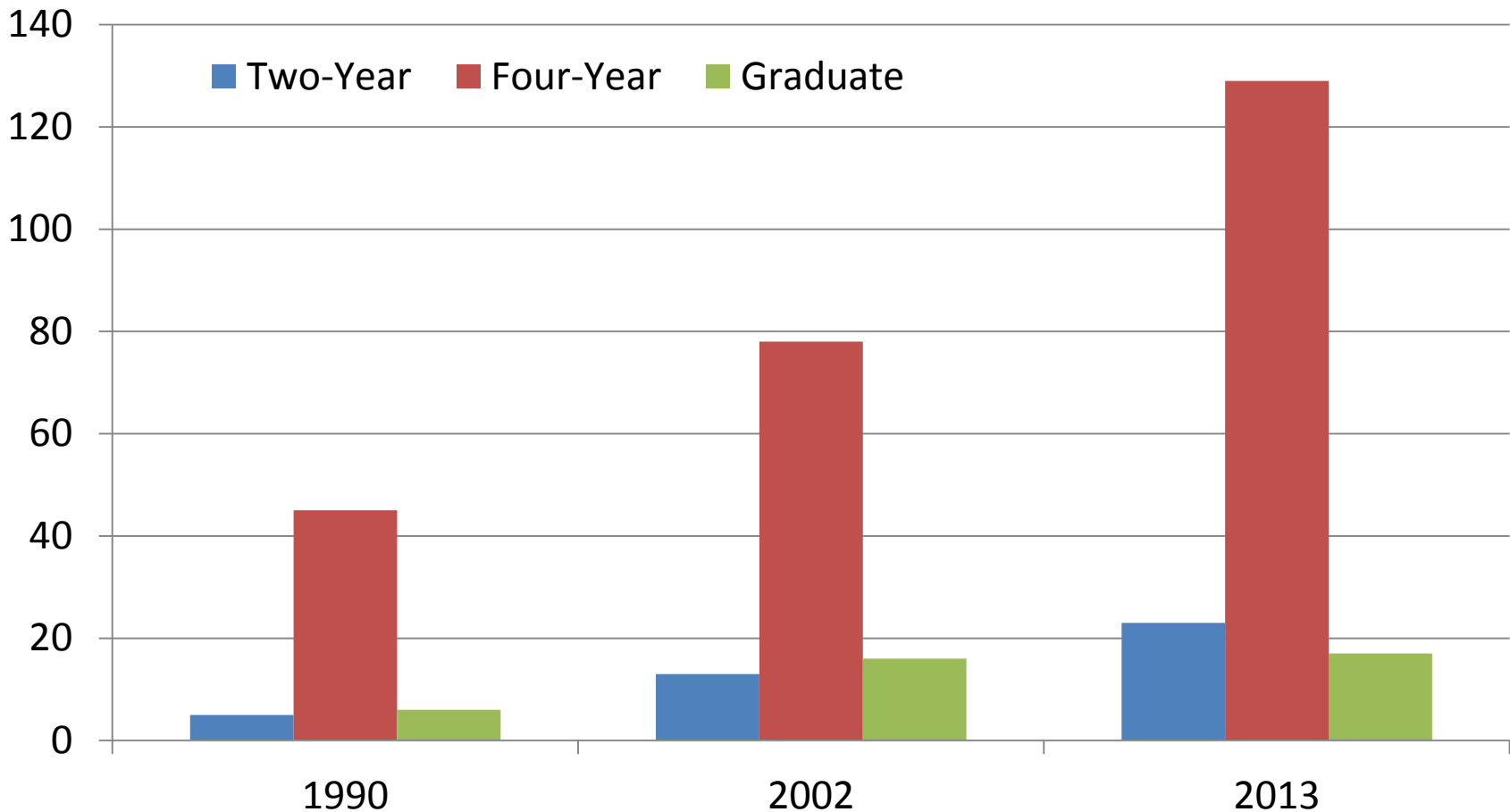


Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.



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Number of Institutions Reporting Enrollments in Korean, by Level

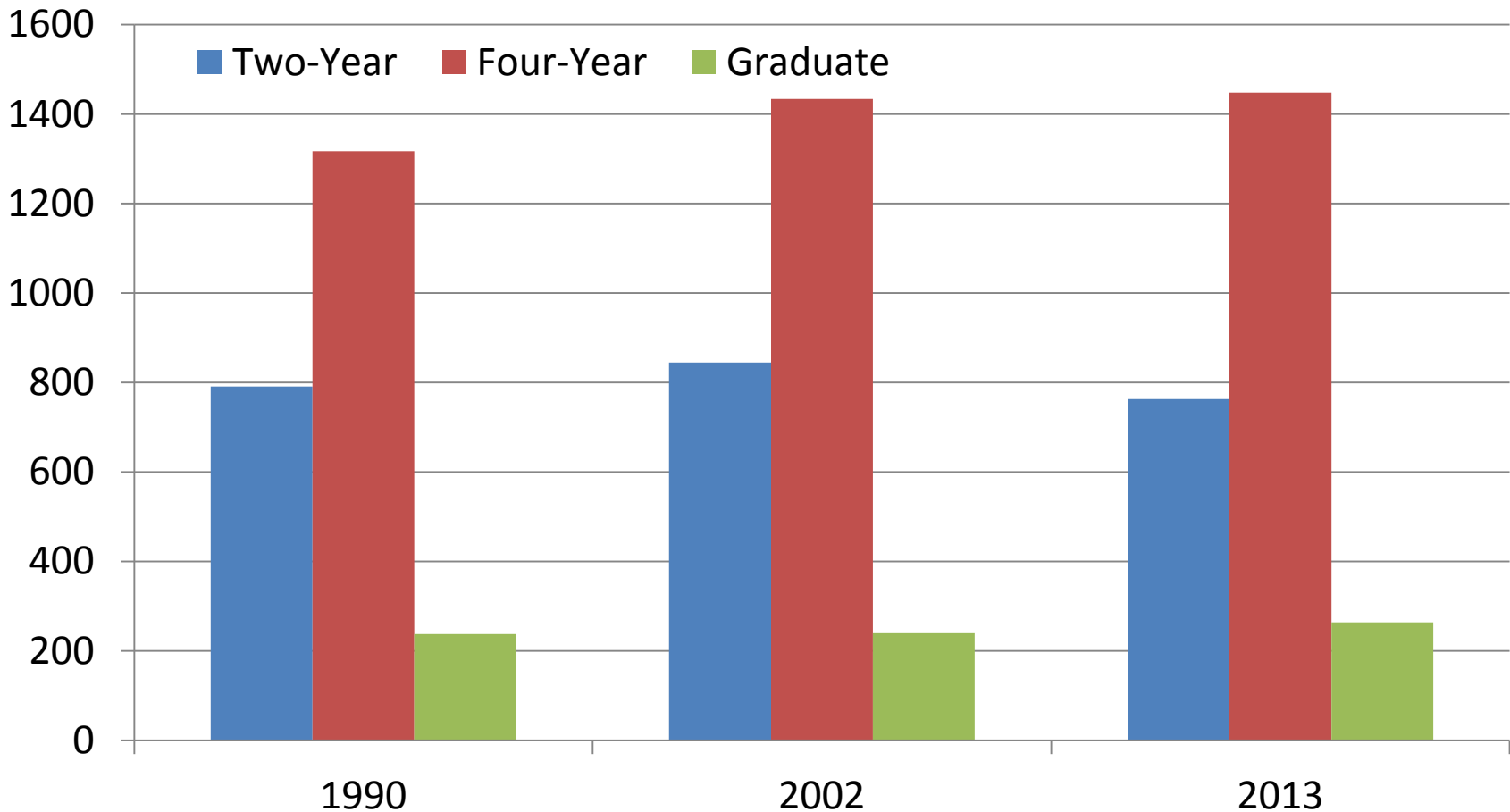


Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

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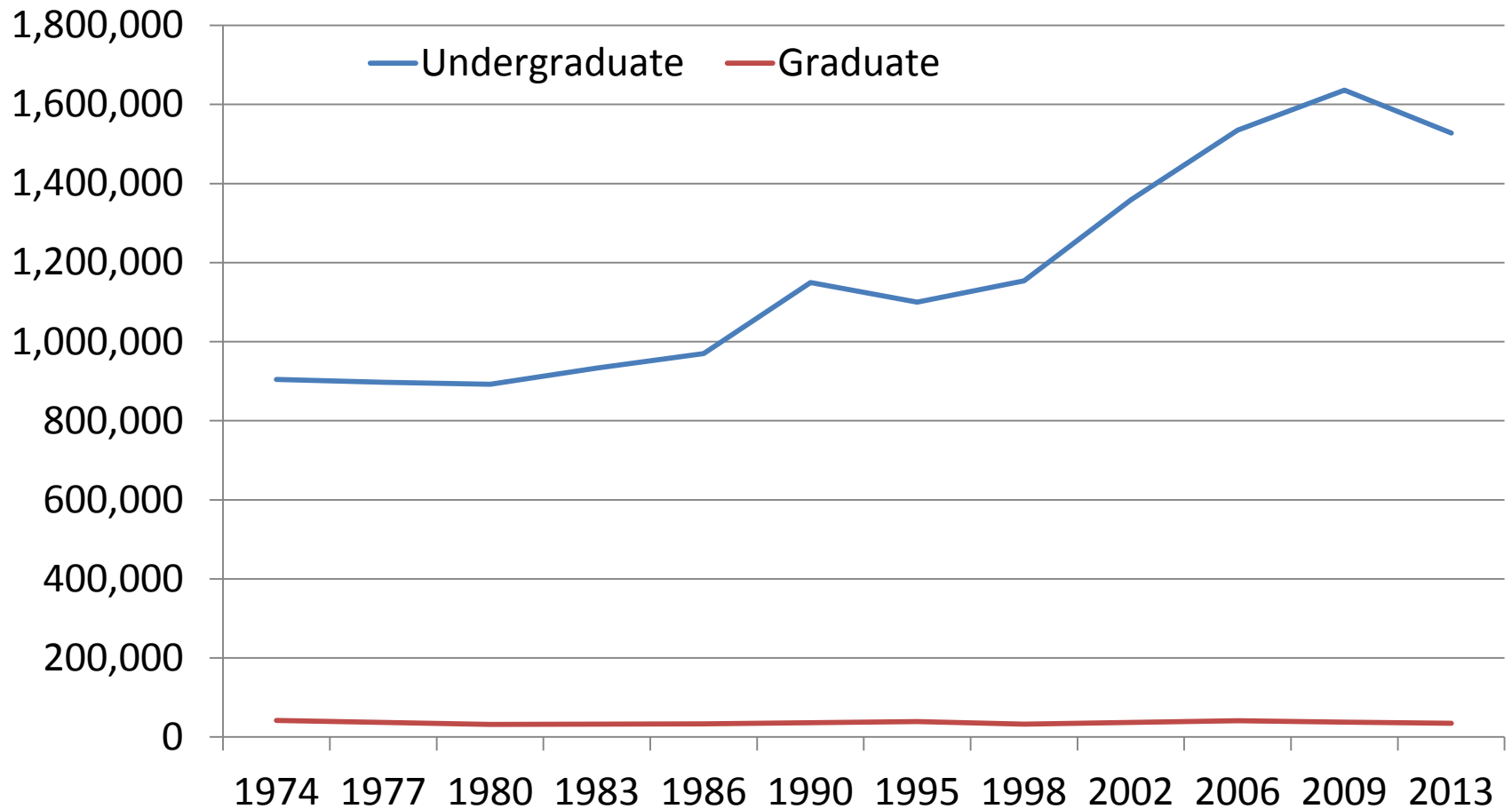
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Number of Institutions Reporting Enrollments in Spanish, by Level



Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

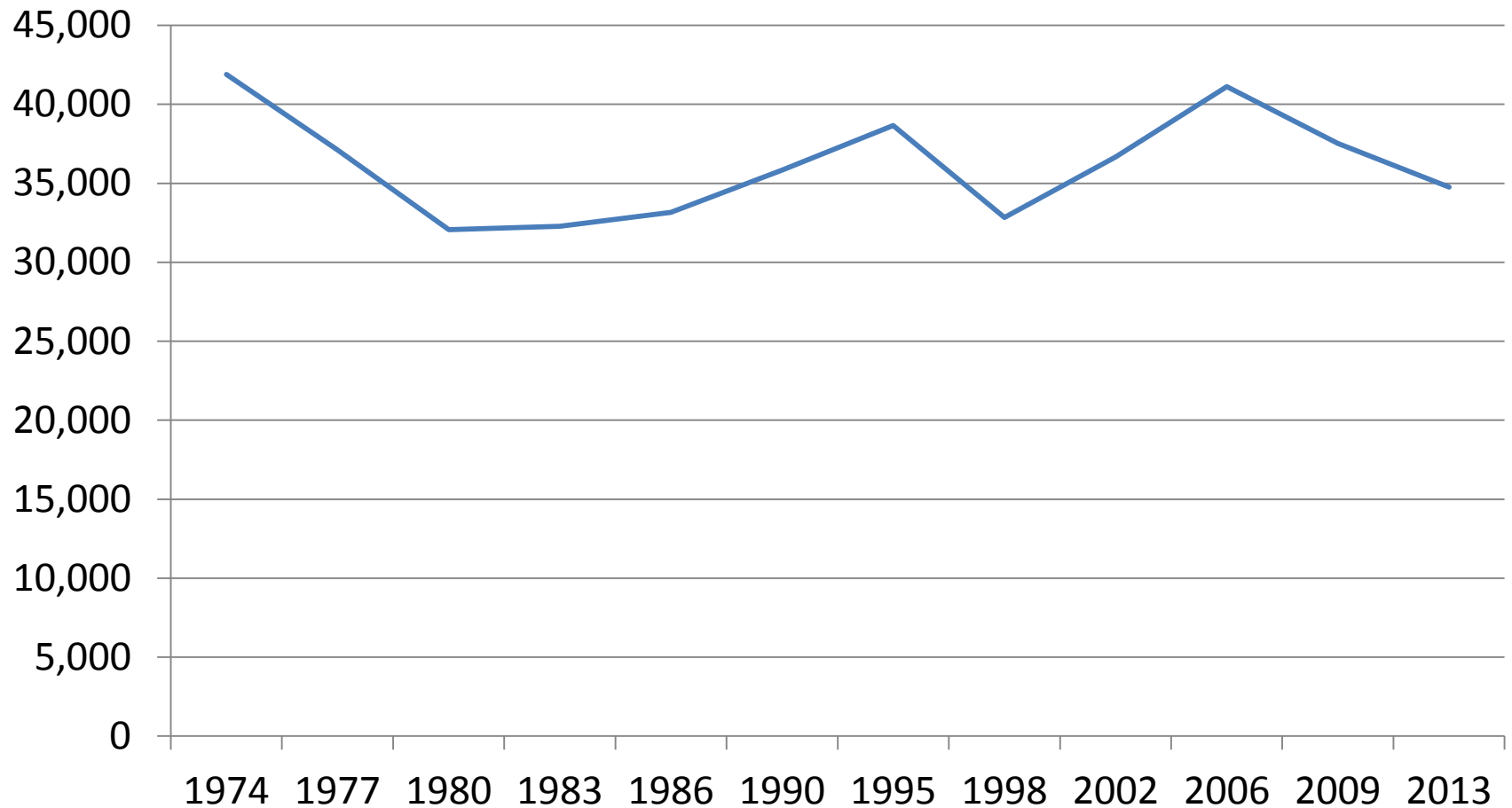
Undergraduate enrollments--68.9% increase, 1974 to 2013



Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.



Graduate enrollments--17.0% decline, 1974 to 2013



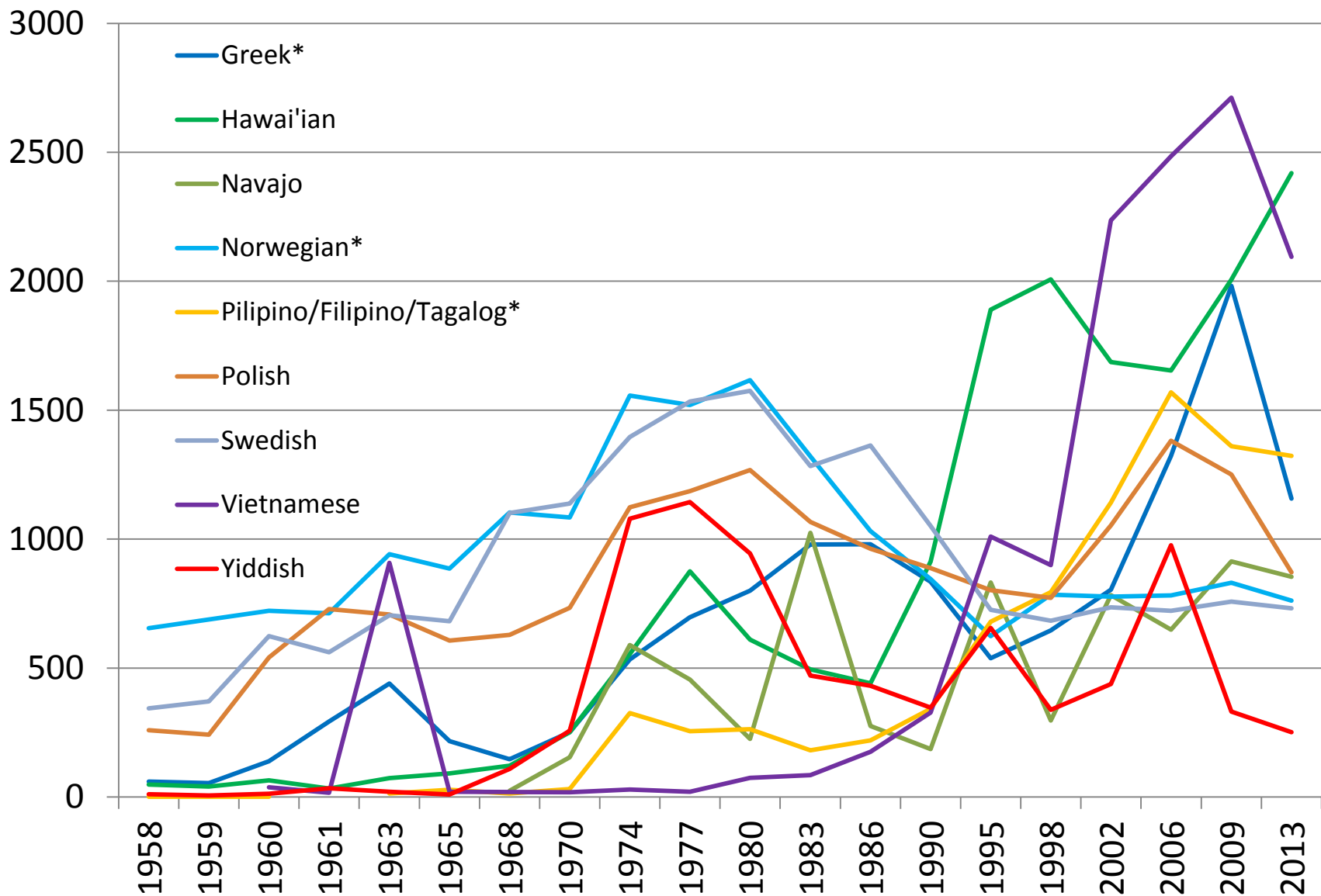
Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.



Percentage of Programs with Decreasing, Stable, or Increasing Enrollments, 2009–2013

Program Level	% Change in Enrollments	Decreasing Enrollments	Stable* Enrollments	Increasing Enrollments	Stable or Increasing Enrollments
Arabic					
All Levels	-7.5	46.7	11.4	41.9	53.3
Graduate	-20.1	42.4	33.3	24.2	57.6
French					
All Levels	-8.1	51.6	10.5	37.9	48.4
Graduate	-24.7	40.3	32.8	26.9	59.7
German					
All Levels	-9.3	53.6	10.8	35.6	46.4
Graduate	-24.6	49.2	26.2	24.6	50.8

*The percentage of programs with stable enrollments includes those with changes of plus or minus 2 enrollments.



Source: Language Enrollment Database, 1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Selected LCTLs Selected Years (MLA)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2002	2006	2009	2013
Armenian*	56	42	231	255	217	607	882	862	826
Dakota/Lakota*			166	159	476	610	644	913	743
Greek*	139	251	800	835	538	804	1,323	1,982	1,157
Hawai'ian	65	251	610	913	1,890	1,687	1,654	2,006	2,419
Navajo		154	225	186	832	783	649	914	854
Norwegian*	722	1,084	1,616	845	624	777	782	831	762
Pilipino/Filipino/ Tagalog*	1	31	263	342	680	1,142	1,569	1,360	1,323
Polish	541	734	1,268	888	802	1,053	1,381	1,251	871
Ukrainian	59	65	111	69	84	126	103	74	59
Vietnamese	38	18	74	327	1,010	2,236	2,485	2,712	2,095
Yiddish	13	257	944	347	656	438	976	331	251

Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Two-Year and Four-Year LCTL enrollments

Language		1974	1977	1980	1983	1986	1990	1995	1998	2002	2006	2009	2013
Armenian													
	2-year	44	57	104		36	85	67	80	318	489	537	512
	4-year	67	92	113	129	108	164	140	233	278	390	324	313
ASL													
	2-year						1,140	3,394	6,960	37,888	44,592	51,830	50,871
	4-year						439	852	4,297	22,772	34,348	39,407	56,065
Farsi/Persian													
	2-year												
	4-year	207	513	647	359	237	295	390	317	744	1,528	1,799	2,044
Hawai'ian													
	2-year	150	300	193	213	199	299	635	645	667	549	556	669
	4-year	405	574	417	282	242	614	1,255	1,344	1,014	1,078	1,351	1,663
Korean													
	2-year		22	42	60		141	169	624	1,055	1,244	1,079	1,377
	4-year	67	135	322	568	845	2,188	2,943	3,546	4,045	5,665	7,018	10,195
Navajo													
	2-year	188	261	73	883	125	94	657	169	198	183	245	176
	4-year	399	193	152	140	148	92	175	127	585	464	665	678
Vietnamese													
	2-year			50	42	56	169	489	385	1,185	1,203	1,465	1,079
	4-year	19	20	19	43	118	151	390	491	1,003	1,261	1,231	1,007
Yiddish													
	2-year			117	32	25	3	15					
	4-year	1,061	1,015	793	425	388	322	614	324	414	932	301	230

Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

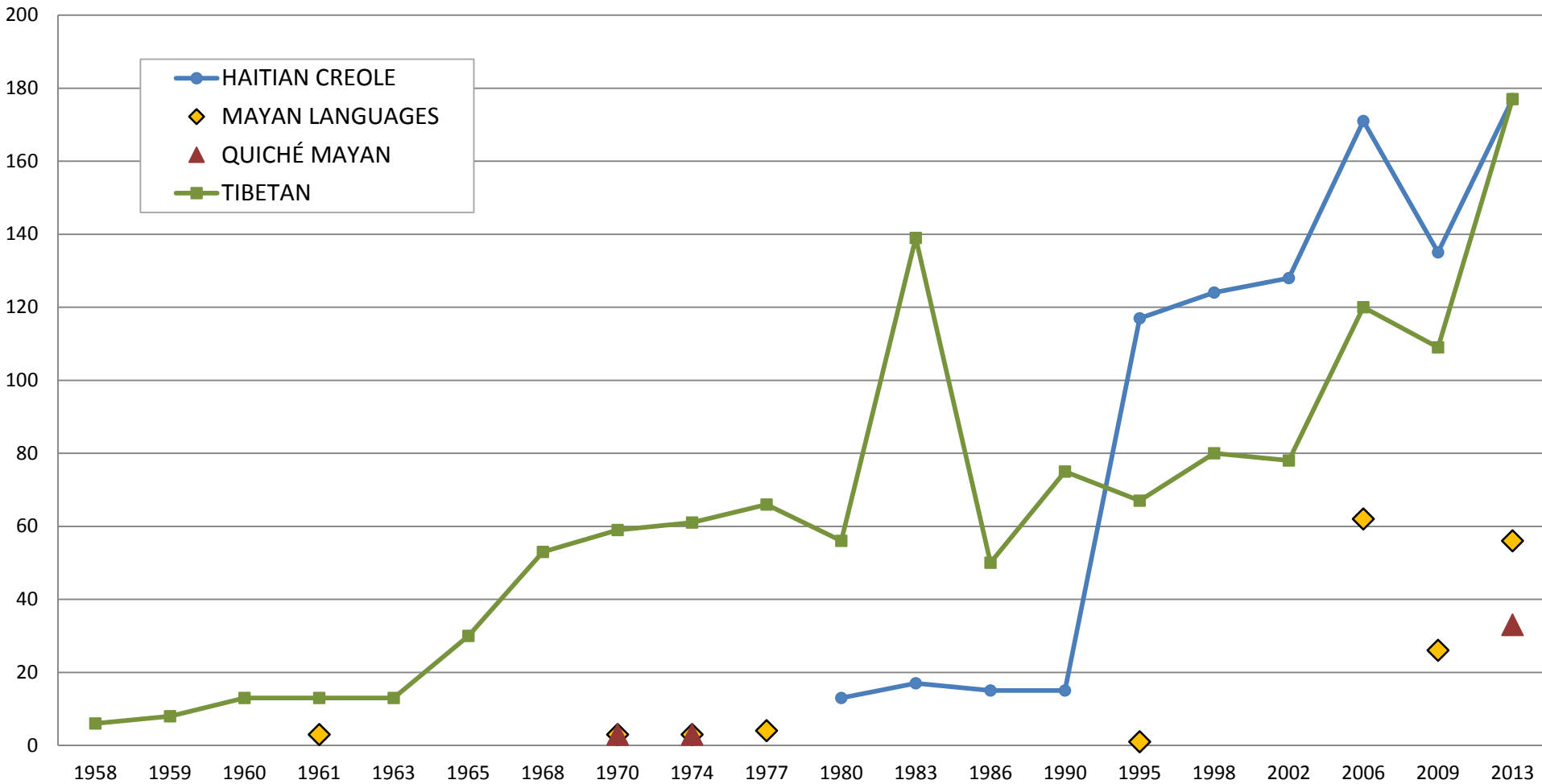
US Decennial Census

(ACS in 2010)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Armenian*	37,270	38,323	100,634	149,694	202,708	223,914
Dakota/Lakota*				15,400		17,720
Greek*	180,781	193,745	401,443	388,260	365,440	321,144
Hawai'ian						26,607
Navajo				170,717	178,020	169,988
Norwegian*	152,687	94,365	34,903	80,723		40,637
Pilipino/Filipino/ Tagalog*	73,500	152,498	474,150	746,443	1,224,245	1,542,118
Polish	581,936	419,912	820,647	723,483	843,251	604,234
Ukrainian	106,974	96,635	70,117	96,568	129,180	134,506
Vietnamese			197,588	507,069	1,009,625	1,292,448
Yiddish	503,605	438,116	315,953	213,064	178,945	154,433

Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.

Enrollments in Haitian Creole, Mayan Languages, Quiché Mayan, and Tibetan over Time, MLA Enrollments Surveys



Source: Language Enrollment Database,
1958–2013. Modern Language Association.



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http://www.mla.org/enrollments_surveys
- To search the Language Enrollment Database:
http://www.mla.org/flsurvey_search
- MLA Language Map:
<http://arcgis.mla.org/mla/default.aspx>